

CROPPING STRATEGIES

By Karl Czymmek

PRO-DAIRY brings you a plethora of great ideas to help you grow crops better

Good growing

It's always fun to write about crops in the dead of winter. Talking about corn populations, manure incorporation and nutrients for alfalfa, for example, reminds us that the mud, snow and cold will pass, and we can count on the renewal of spring.

Putting together a series of cropping articles for this month's *The Manager* in *Eastern DairyBusiness* also provides a chance to reflect on the past growing season and to think about questions producers will want answered for the upcoming growing season.

Farmers and their advisers are the sources of many of the questions we try to answer through the work described in the range of articles covered in this PRO-DAIRY crops section. They are also collaborators on several of the field trials described in articles such as *Soil may supply adequate K* (Page 22). That research included 55 fields across New York State. The value to you, our readers, is that

research takes place on farms like yours with soils and growing conditions like yours. This makes research results all the more valuable.

A number of the cropping articles cover corn silage: selecting hybrids, fertilizing the crop, storing silage and taking care of the ground after harvest. Given the price of corn and soybeans, learning all you can to maximize your forage production is a big deal.

We can't ignore manure and how to get more out of its nutrients. We also have articles on other nutrients such as potassium and sulfur. For people looking at alternatives, we include an article on harvesting grass for homegrown fuel and a producer who is successfully doing this.

We hope this month's *The Manager* whets your appetite for spring and helps you to grow better crops and save some money while you're at it. □

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